PERIODICO EN ESPAÑOL ADENTRO

# CHALLENGE

THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

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# PLP Anti-Racist Summer Projects

## Haiti: Picket Lines, Health Clinic, Freedom School



**PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI, July 18 —** Health workers, teachers, and students from the U.S. joined with our counterparts in a show of international solidarity in the class struggle. The first week of the Summer Project included organizing a health clinic and a freedom school. By relying on friends and comrades we were able to see 150 patients from two tent camps.

More than one million are forced to live in tents because the January 2010 earthquake either destroyed their homes or made them structurally unsound. The people in camps have been waiting on the government for help while trying to survive in these "temporary" facilities for the last year and a half.

The goals of the health clinic included trying to provide clinical health services and building awareness of public health issues like cholera, asthma, high blood pressure, and diabetes. We provided information and had discussions on how many of these diseases are related to social class, and ones' ability to access clean water, enough food, and medical care. Many complained of gastrointestinal ailments that may have been due to a lack of food; also vaginal infections which may have been attributed to frequent douching, which changes the pH of the vagina.

In the clinic's waiting area, people said that they were disgusted with the government's inaction, and the UN troops which occupy Haiti. We were told that the troops spend most of the time on the beaches, and raping women. We used this opportunity to have political discussions on the struggle against our common enemy, the capitalist ruling class.

Haiti is a vivid example of capitalism's use of racism to exploit workers. It has kept black workers there in virtual slavery for centuries and now has failed to alleviate the suffering from the earthquake that tore the country apart. This has produced super-profits for imperialist bosses.

One of the highlights of the week was when we joined workers on their picket line. About 800 workers had been laid off from the mayor's office, but were never paid what they were owed. They sued and won in court, but under capitalism, the

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## Students, Teachers Blast 'Education Genocide'

**CHICAGO, July 18 —** "Brizard, you can't hide, education cuts cause genocide!" rang through the streets of downtown Chicago on July 6. (Brizard is Chicago's new schools CEO.) Students and teachers marched against Chicago Public Schools (CPS) bosses and the banks that steal millions from the education system.

The march was the closing event of an all-day National Conference to Fight Back for Public Education, organized by various "progressive" caucuses and union leaders.

### PLP Exposes Fascist Assault on Public Schools

PL'ers participated on different levels. They advanced the Party's politics, charging that the assault on public education is part of the bosses' plan to step up fascist attacks and prepare our class for larger imperialist wars.

Many conference participants called for an "end to corporate greed" and to have the bosses pay "their fair share." But workers have no "fair share" when it comes to their exploitation by the bosses who grab as much of the value produced by the working class as they can.

The Party exposed the fact that the cuts in education and health care were racist — falling most heavily on black and Latino workers and students — a product of capitalism, not just "bad capitalists." Students from Farragut H.S., who are close to the Party, really brought this point to the fore as they led the chant, "How do you spell RACIST?!... CPS!"

### Marchers Free Student From KKKop Attack

These students, guided by the leadership of PLP, were finally given the vehicle to express their anger and frustration at the system. They were so good at it that a kkkop pulled one of them from the march for chanting "FIGHT BACK!"in his ear.

Immediately the marchers chanted "Let him go!" and he was quickly released. Even after the harassment, the student was not intimidated and led the marchers to chant, "They say cut back, WE SAY FIGHT BACK!"

This march was the final event of a week-long Summer Project here, followed by a PLP-hosted

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# The Bosses' Profits Have No Ceiling

The recent drama over the federal debt limit, with politicians in gridlock amid scare stories that the U.S. government might default on its bills, marks a significant move toward fascism by an embattled capitalist ruling class.

A default was averted when Democrats and Republicans agreed to at least $2.1 trillion spending cut over the next decade to counter a hike in the debt "ceiling," the legal cap set by Congress on government borrowing. But the rulers' internal crisis remains. The debt ceiling battle reveals their two essential needs in the current period:

- To wring extreme profits from the working class with cuts in critical social services in a period of perpetual and massive racist unemployment.
- To discipline their own ranks to help fund imperialist wars abroad and repair a crumbling infrastructure at home.

These imperatives are the hallmarks of fascism, the phase of capitalism that forces the ruling class to discard its mask of liberal democracy. President Obama recently took the lead on both fronts with his "Grand Bargain." This ploy for "shared sacrifice" called for a devastating $3 trillion in spending cuts over the next ten years, alongside just $1 trillion in tax increases for corporations and the wealthiest Americans.

The Republicans' "no-new-taxes" (on the rich) pledge, pushed hardest by the elements coalescing around the Tea Party, gives Obama cover to maintain his liberal credentials even as he ruthlessly targets the most vulnerable workers: the old, the sick, the poor. And as the first black president, he is the bosses' perfect tool to impose racist cutbacks that fall most heavily on black and Latino workers, the same people who were hardest hit by the latest economic crisis (*see box on page 5*).

### Capitalists Divided

Liberal analysts misrepresented Washington's debt standoff as a battle between crazed GOP ideologues and sane if ineffectual Democrats, like Obama, who are striving to protect a fragile economy.

In fact, both sides are acting rationally, against the working class, in selfish pursuit of profits. They represent two camps of capitalists with conflicting interests. As Lenin noted in *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, there is a yawning gulf between entrepreneurs, who profit by managing capital in productive businesses, and financiers, who profit purely from "money capital" and seek to extend their domination over finance capitalists in other countries. The biggest financiers' massive overseas investments require "the intensification of antagonisms between imperialist nations for the division of the world." By that, Lenin meant world war.

In the U.S. today, both capitalist factions demand the racist looting of Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. Their clash stems from how they get their respective wealth. The entrepreneurs (such as Koch Industries; *see box*) have a short-term, domestic focus that favors younger, rising firms. The financiers, represented by Obama and the banker-backed liberal wing led by the Rockefeller interests, have a longer-term, imperialist outlook to defend their worldwide empire, from Iraq to Afghanistan to Pakistan to Somalia and beyond. The financial capitalists still dominate U.S. policy — although, as the debt flap reveals, not absolutely.

On July 28, the nation's biggest imperialist bankers sent a letter to Obama to plead for a resolution to the recent Congressional impasse. The consequences of a default, they wrote, would be "very grave" for "America's global economic leadership" — a code phrase for imperialism. The signers included the chiefs of JPMorgan Chase, Citigroup, Bank of New York Mellon, and Boston's State Street, which hold a combined $71 trillion in global assets under custody. By contrast, Forbes magazine estimates the Kochs' wealth at $44 billion.

### Going Where the Money Is

Obama's cut and tax strategy has been shelved for now. But the president and his cheerleaders at the New York Times, both representing the main wing of the ruling class, will soon be back to demand that bosses big and small pony up — and $1 trillion will be just a down payment.

For the bosses, it's less a matter of "fairness" than of narrowing options. They are willing and eager to drain the working class, but they're running into objective limits. The global financial meltdown obliterated millions of jobs in the U.S., along with the tax revenues they generate. (In June, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the "real" unemployment rate — including unemployed, under-employed, and people "marginally attached to the workforce" — stood at 16.2 %, or more than 25 million people suffering for lack of work in the third year of Obama's dead-on-arrival "recovery." And for black and Latino workers, those jobless rates are double.)

Workers are being sucked dry. Thinning the social safety net will not be enough to keep the war machine humming. Both Obama and Republican

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## Kochs Challenge Rockefellers; Workers Must Throw Them All Out

The Koch brothers, who finance the Tea Party and bash Obama, buy oil and manufactured products in many countries. They are heavily invested in industrialist accumulation in the U.S. but do not own a major bank nor do they profit from the huge U.S. war machine. However, they are also trying to establish a niche in their own special form of "imperialism on the cheap."

The Kochs bankroll the Cato Foundation think-tank. Its Mid-East expert Leon Hadar thinks that the "ballooning deficit and an overstretched military leave Americans no choice but to make major cuts in defense spending by shrinking [the] U.S. role in the Middle East." (Huffington Post, 7/5/11)

Hadar, no doubt smelling a potential supplier to Koch Oil, sees a deal with Teheran in the offing: "The United States should take part in any negotiations leading to regional agreements on Afghanistan and Iraq, a process that could also become an opportunity to improve the relationship with Iran." (Cato Institute, 7/1/11) This, of course, runs counter to the interests of the Rockefeller-led, imperialist wing of the U.S. ruling class which controls the largest chunk of Mid-East oil supplies.

### Obama Fronts for Dominant Rockefeller Wing; Kochs Want Piece of the Action

The Koch brothers dream of catching up to the Rockefellers but the closest they've come to wielding state power is Tea Party obstructionism in Congress. They have a long way to go to match the Rockefellers' long history of transforming their Standard Oil monopoly into a banking empire. Having trumped the J.P. Morgan clan by the 1930s, World War II left the Rockfellers heading up the biggest U.S. banks and therefore with the resources to supply the controlling capital in the U.S. war industry, putting them in position to shape U.S. foreign policy to protect their imperialist interests abroad.

During the Vietnam genocide of the 1960s and 1970s, James and David Rockefeller personally headed the ancestors of Citigroup and JP Morgan Chase. Nelson Rockefeller was governor of New York and later became U.S. vice-president. David Rockefeller ran U.S. imperialism's most influential policy foundry as president of the Council on Foreign Relations; its most influential university as president of Harvard's overseers; and its most influential "philanthropies," the various Rockefeller foundations.

The Koch brothers' challenge to this mammoth empire puts them into a fierce dogfight with the world's most powerful capitalists, a battle over who can exploit the most workers. The Rockefellers have been reaping super-profits from workers on five continents. The Koch brothers were behind the attack on Wisconsin's state workers and teachers that cut their wages, benefits and bargaining rights. The only interest the working class has in this fight is to overthrow both sides with communist revolution.

## OUR FIGHT

**✮Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.**

**✮Only the dictatorship of the working class — communism — can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.**

**✮Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.**

**✮While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.**

**✮Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. Everyone will share in society's benefits and burdens.**

**✮Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit black, Latino, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.**

**✮Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women — sexism — and divisive gender roles created by the class society.**

**✮Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.**

**✮Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.**

**✮Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!**

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### *Why Articles Are Not Signed*

The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual. While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

## PLP Summer Project Backs:

# Strikers with 'Mops and Stethoscopes' Fighting U.S./Haitian Bosses

**PORT-AU-PRINCE, July 21** — "Haiti has a hardscrabble beauty," an art historian said about its eroding slopes, its city streets turned into a huge informal market, its people always on the move in the daily scramble for food. However, Haiti, at the bottom rung of racist capitalism, has the beauty of workers struggling with their backs against the wall.

Workers at the University Hospital (HUEH) led off a strike with a demonstration at the Ministry of Health, for unpaid wages, decent health services for patients and working conditions for workers. Our PLP Summer Project medical clinic team spotted the demonstration and learned more from the local nurses working with us. The strikers are in the Syndicat des Travailleurs de Santé (STS — Health Workers' Union), an industrial union whose logo combines a stethoscope with a mop.



Today we brought 50 students from our Project's freedom school, and health workers and translators from our medical clinic to the sweltering STS union hall. We were given some of the few seats, fans were brought up, and they looked at us expectantly.

Charles, the head of their negotiating committee, explained the problems at HUEH, whose administrator lives in Canada and, with his cronies, gets paid in U.S. dollars. They have, in essence, destroyed the hospital.

Since the earthquake, labs, medicines, even food for the patients are missing or are allowed to deteriorate. Workers must find food for the patients themselves. The bosses allow patients to pile in without the means of caring for them. And workers being paid? Maybe.

As Charles said, these terrible services for patients occur alongside terrible working conditions for their caretakers, plus the stress of being unable to provide needed care.

The STS president Milot, a doctor, wrung his hands as he described the pain workers felt, prevented by the bosses' system from using their strength, skills and creativity to treat other workers who need them so badly. He and Charles thanked us for our solidarity across the seas, his hands clutching the precious handful of $20 bills we donated to the fund.

Someone started a chant in English, "Same Enemy, Same Fight! Workers of the World Unite!" Our STS hosts took it up as best they could. Some of us lost our voices there today.

A Physician's Assistant from the Bronx described his public hospital's conditions as failing to improve over his 30 years of service, actually declining steadily over the last five years. A Dominican teacher, also from the Bronx, called for unity of workers on both sides of the bosses' colonial border dividing Haiti from the Dominican Republic. A student from Mexico working here in our clinic added greetings from workers in Mexico.

We did the best we could with English and Spanish translated into French so a friend from Haiti could put it all into Kreyòl. We said we'd start a campaign of letters of support from the U.S. and elsewhere, and picket the Haitian consulate. It was, well, beautiful — and then we bumped our way home over the hardscrabble streets.

What is beauty? This recalls the common question among PLP'ers: "What is winning?" Workers' struggle in and of itself is, as the Irish poet Yeats wrote, "a terrible beauty," and nothing is uglier than the blank, depressed defeat of the dark night of the soul. But all reform struggle fades, slowly if it wins, and with a sad and terrible speed if it loses.

What our class needs in Haiti is a communist revolution. It cannot come a moment too soon, clearly seen as you watch a hungry child devour the bananes braisées from our Sunday picnic on a public beach as if they were sacred.

The revolutionary beauty our class needs must come from the strikers with mops and stethoscopes and from the anger of hungry children. It must come from their worldwide communist party. The truth of PLP's ideas and the strength of its international organizing are the only adequate response to the racist crime that is Haiti today.

Send letters of strike support to Syndicat des Travailleurs de Santé, Siège Social HUEH, Rue Monseigneur Guilloux, Port-au-Prince, Haiti.✪




PLP'ers unfold banner inside NEA convention.

# 'Education Genocide'

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"reflection dinner." Two students and one youth worker from Farragut spoke at the dinner about their experiences. The students thanked the Party for the "love and support" during the march, one saying he was happy not to be in jail.

The youth worker told a PL'er who he works with that he "felt at home." He went to the New York Summer Project the following week and, after months of struggle, has now joined the Party. Five students now want to be in a PL study group.

We didn't get the banks to stop robbing the working class, but we recruited a new comrade and brought more people closer to the Party. Building PLP and the movement for communist revolution is how we measure success within our activity in mass organizations.

The bosses can always take away reforms, but the might of the working class led by PLP fighting for a communist society is the only way to gain the life our class deserves. The more we recruit to our revolutionary army, the more we can defend our class from the bosses' attacks now and prepare ourselves to take the offensive in the future.✪

# Haiti Summer Project

*continued from front page*

courts are just another branch of the government, working for the interests of the ruling class.

The workers have still not been paid after four years of struggle. We chanted in French/Kreyòl, "Workers Should Be Paid," and "Justice for Workers." We heard drivers' horns blow in support of the picketers from the busy street. International solidarity was the order of the day.

The freedom school was attended by many students eager to exchange ideas that spanned broad social issues. The classrooms were overflowing with students enthusiastically discussing what is taught in the schools and what ideas are important to the working class, as well as the unity of teachers and students, and an analysis of capitalism and imperialism. Ninety percent of the schools in Haiti are private, so many have no opportunity for an education. People hunger for more education.

The friends we have made in Haiti signifies many new opportunities for building PLP. The future is bright!✪



## Training for Revolution

# Jewish and Arab Workers, Students Halt Racist Eviction

**RAMLA, PALESTINE, July 26 —** After more than a month of struggle, the eviction warrant placed at the al-Aju family compound was finally revoked. This victory was met with celebration by family members, neighbors and activists — both Jewish and Arab, workers and students — who supported the struggle. This small victory and others like it are a signal, not that capitalism can serve the needs of workers, but that a united working class has tremendous power and that we are moving toward exerting that power in communist revolution.

This struggle has deep roots in the recent history of Palestine. In the 1948 war, the al-Aju family — originally Arabs from the nearby town of Lydda (Lod) — was deported from their homes by the Israeli military. However, unlike many other Palestinian refugees, the family managed to remain inside the so-called Green Line and has settled on the land of another Arab family that had been driven off its land by Israeli bosses. As its original owners were no longer present, the Israeli state took over the land, and managed it through the national housing company Amidar.

For over sixty years, the al-Aju family lived on the land as tenants, paying rent in full to the landlords, Amidar. The family's men are municipal maintenance workers, working hard for a low wage; some, especially of the younger generation, couldn't find a job at all. As apartments are rarely marketed to Arabs in Israel, the entire family had to build their homes on the same plot of land, with over 70 people, including dozens of children, living in that cramped space with minimal infrastructure.

However, this situation was not profitable for the Amidar bosses. Looking to sell this land off to a real-estate developer who would build upscale apartments, Amidar tried twice to evict the al-Aju family from its land, both in April and June-July of 2011. However, the family did not surrender to the racist court's orders, and fought back.

Helping the al-Aju family was the Solidarity organization, a broad coalition of Jewish and Arab left-wing activists (mostly students and workers), ranging from liberals to anarchists to communists, who are fighting against the racism, apartheid and fascism of the Israeli regime. At the eviction date in April, Solidarity activists held a rally against Amidar and the cops, and managed to stop the eviction attempt.

In early July, the court issued a "flexible" warrant for a whole month, meaning that Amidar and the cops could evict the al-Aju family from its home, children included, with no notice. To defeat this, Solidarity — in which several PL'ers are active — organized shifts of volunteers to sit at the al-Aju compound, give support to the family, and quickly call in help from additional activists in case the Amidar thugs and the cops showed up.

On July 25th, a large rally was held near the al-Aju compound, where the family's father said over the bullhorn that he will stay in his house no matter what, and that "the revolution starts from the al-Aju compound." An activist leader said that the family would be evicted only over his dead body, and a PL'er made the point plainly: "a system that can't provide everyone with a roof over their heads has to destroyed."

On July 26th we achieved a victory when the District Court decided to revoke the eviction warrant until further notice. This action gives us a glimpse at the power of the working class, when we are united across boundaries. This was a great training session for what we will need to do to finally defeat the landlords, the cops and the racist courts.

We call it a training session because this victory, like all reform victories, has an expiration date. The bosses have the ultimate trump card, state power, that they use to undo the major and minor advances that the working class wins. The warrant was revoked "until further notice," which means that this battle will have to be fought again. But all is not in vain: a family has a little more security in their home — no small thing! But perhaps more importantly, communist ideas have been injected into the struggle. The al-Aju family and Solidarity know that communism is not dead, that there is a Party focused on the day when we will graduate from fighting evictions to fighting against the system that throws working-class families out into the streets.✪

## 'Our Union's in bed with the Bosses...'

# Brookdale Rank-and-File Must Unite and Lead the Struggle

**BROOKLYN, N.Y., July 29 —** "So what they're talking about doing here is building a whole working-class movement, beyond our union," stated one Brookdale worker to another at a home visit by PLP members. Despite torrential rain, we met to discuss the ongoing struggle at Brookdale Hospital, which foreshadows the even bigger racist cuts coming from the Obama-Tea Party circus, such as the $655 billion federal cuts in Medicaid, Medicare, and Social Security. Brookdale Hospital and its 3,500 workers, in the majority black and Latino working-class Brownsville neighborhood have been stripped bare by the racist bosses of MediSys. The misleadership of Local 1199 of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU — *see previous CHALLENGE, 8/3*).

Workers expressed their disappointment that the fight hasn't escalated further, regardless of the militant sit-downs and picketing. "When we go outside now to march, we tell everybody in our department, 'hey! You all should take your lunch break and come march with us!'"

After the previous months of struggle and confrontation between the workers and bosses, these workers didn't hide their frustration with the declining militancy, and exasperation at how the hospital bosses are getting away scot-free. "We were telling the union for months what was going on here." Another worker declared, "but they kept telling us to wait until the legal people did something." The 1199 leaders are out for their own interests; it's time to call upon new leadership, ourselves.

The MediSys-owned Peninsula Hospital, located in the borough of Queens, announced last week it is closing. This news was received with surprise and anxiety at Brookdale. The union Local 1199 leadership, is not only uninterested in fighting back at Brookdale, but uninterested in fighting back at all! Peninsula Hospital is closing due to the same series of attacks MediSys has made on Brookdale. Union leadership does not have the workers' interests; as workers we need to unite and fight for our class interests.

A PL'er asked, "Why didn't the union, which was aware of Peninsula's troubles for months, organize any solidarity events between Brookdale, Peninsula, and every union member in the city with it's 250,000 members?"

"Because our union's in bed with the bosses!" shot back a worker.

PLP isn't building some union or electoral party, but a fighting, revolutionary communist working-class party.

CHALLENGE, unlike all other media, is the working class's paper and shows capitalism as the root cause of our current problems. Brookdale workers are learning that PLP is with them shoulder-to-shoulder. A major aspect of our struggle with the Brookdale workers has been trying to keep a long-term outlook. Strike or no strike, "win" or "lose" this round, the bosses' racist class war rages on against the working class; the struggle continues.

Distribution of CHALLENGE to Brookdale workers, struggling with the workers over the ideas in the paper, making new friends, and uniting our lives through our struggles are the orders of the day. Communist revolution is necessary, and can happen as growing CHALLENGE networks make PLP's ideas mass ideas.✪



Many members and friends have asked what we are doing to remember Milt Rosen, founding chairperson of PLP. Progressive Labor Party has established a fund to honor Milt and Harriet Rosen. The International Solidarity Fund will be used to continue our work training young leaders in the 25 countries where we have members and to spread PLP ideas all over the globe. This will help turn the idea of one worldwide communist party into reality.

**Memorial Service:**

Los Angeles on September 25, 2011

Brooklyn, New York on Sunday, October 9, 20ll at 1:30 pm

Old First Church, Corner of 7th Avenue and Carroll Street

Make checks payable to CHALLENGE Periodicals. Write "solidarity fund" on the subject line or give to your local PLP club. Send to PO Box 808, Brooklyn, NY 11202

# France: Workers Fight GM Attacks

**STRASBOURG, FRANCE, July 7** — Exploiting the give-backs agreed to by the unions last year has spurred GM to further attack the workers at its plant here. This has sparked fierce resistance by the workers. The company claims union secretary and shop steward Roland Robert's deafness makes him unable to perform work and wants to transfer him to a job over 800 yards away from the factory. But the independent occupational physician assigned to the plant says many jobs exist inside the plant which he could hold down.

In less than two days, 503 fellow workers signed a petition protesting GM's attack. Yesterday evening, over 100 union reps attended a support meeting. The four trade unions at the plant jointly condemned "management's maneuvers to isolate…Roland Robert from the shops."

The Strasbourg GM workers are asking workers everywhere to send support messages to: CGT General Motors, 81 rue de la Rochelle, 67100 Strasbourg France.

GM's aim is clear: to isolate a union leader, silence worker grievances and weaken the unions at a time when the company continues to envisage closing the plant. More broadly, GM is attacking union rights won through generations of struggle, but that's the way capitalism works — the bosses, through their control of production and the state, eventually wipe out reforms won by workers' past battles.

A continuing struggle against last year's give-back agreement is the background for the enormous pressure on the workers to realize the company's business plan. The company is pushing for 198 workers to take "voluntary retirement." The 60 temporary workers in the plant are a constant reminder that nobody's job is safe.

GM's Strasbourg plant employs 1,040 workers who produce 270,000 gearboxes a year, half for GM and half for BMW. The average gross monthly wage is 1,800 euros (US$ 2,500).

On March 28, part of the GM workforce here struck against those working conditions and against the July 20, 2010 give-back agreement that resulted in the current wage freeze and abolition of the 35-hour week. (See CHALLENGE, Sept. 8, 2010) The strike was backed by the CGT union but opposed by the sellout CFDT trade union, which includes the majority of workers. The strike ended on March 31 with the CGT saying that "through our strike we have won…a written promise from management on an improvement in working conditions." But that 2010 agreement on a wage freeze and ending the 35-hour week remains in force and GM's "promises" are worthless.

GM's attack on its workers here is one more proof that as long as bosses and their system with its drive for profits exists, workers will always be under the gun. Only a communist society run by and for the workers can end this exploitation.✪

# Bosses' Profits Have No Ceiling

*continued from page 2*

House Speaker John Boehner, who signed off on the Grand Bargain before buckling to anti-tax Tea Party pressure, know that they'll eventually have to go to where the money is: to the rich.

In 2008, the median income of the U.S. capitalist elite — the top 0.1% — was $6 million, versus $50,000 for American households as a whole. In 2007, the top 1% of the population controlled 43% of the nation's financial wealth (total net worth minus the value of one's home), or 1½ times the bottom 95 percent. The federal government has locked in these gross inequalities by slashing capital gains and estate taxes and by failing to enforce anti-trust laws (Vanity Fair, May 2011).

But even as the biggest U.S. capitalists rake in more and more, they are contributing less and less to the government that is dedicated to protect their interests. Corporate income taxes now account for only 7% of federal revenues, as compared to 23% in 1960. The jobless rate tells us that corporations aren't using this extra cash to hire more workers. Instead, they're hoarding. The bloodsucking banks aside, non-financial companies are sitting on close to $2 trillion in liquid assets.

The outrageous greed of the super-wealthy fits neatly with the small-government creed of the Tea Party caucus. It works less well, however, with the overriding needs of U.S. imperialism. The debt ceiling fracas was the public face of the rulers' fight over how to divide their wealth and rule their weakening empire. The bitter struggle over the fallback measure, with no boost in needed revenues, is a mere prelude to the struggle to come. The battle should escalate in the fall, when Obama pitches his "balanced approach" (more taxes) to the new Congressional "supercommittee" charged with fleshing out the deficit reduction deal.

### Bosses' Rx: War and Fascism

In the end, the rulers' Rockefeller-led main wing must prevail for U.S. imperialism to fend off its competition. The regional wars of today foreshadow the world war to come, as new imperialist rivals (China, India, Brazil) and old ones (France, Germany, Russia) challenge U.S. dominance. Both now and later, huge infusions of cash will be required to expand the military. Meanwhile, Obama's backers will continue to exploit debt concerns as they build a fascist mass movement — including a military draft and even more extreme worker "sacrifice" — all for the greater good of U.S imperialism.

Fascism represents the ultimate exploitation of workers. The income losses of millions of unemployed and the slashes in wages of tens of millions of those still employed are intensifying the exploitation of workers worldwide. It should be remembered that Germany's Nazis supplemented their extermination camps with thousands of forced labor camps. Millions of Jews, communists, and others were commonly worked to death at mines, quarries, farms, factories, and construction sites. The free labor both shored up the German bosses' profits and sustained their war effort.

Under capitalism, economic crises aren't caused by debts or deficits. They reflect the contradictions of a profit-driven system that can never meet workers' needs. That's why we must fight for a world run by workers for the working class, not for the bankrolls of a few parasites on the top. Fight for a communist society for the working class led by PLP! Join us!✪

### Depression Intensifies Racism As Basis of Capitalist Super-profits

A Pew Research analysis (7/26/11) "shows the racial and ethnic impact of the economic meltdown, which ravaged housing values and sent unemployment soaring." *(AP, 7/26)*

The net worth of black households in 2009 at $5,677 was one-twentieth of that of white households. For Latino households at $6,325 it was one-eighteenth.

From 2005 to 2009, Latino household net worth declined by 66%. Black household net worth shrank by 56% over that period. Much of this was due to their home equity losses, both from home foreclosures and plummeting home values, as well as double unemployment rates.

The Pew Research report also found that 35% of black households had zero or negative net worth. For Latino households it was 31%.

Said Roderick Harrison, former chief of racial statistics at the Census Bureau, "Typically in recessions, minorities suffer from being last hired and first fired. They are likely to lose jobs more rapidly at the beginning of a recession, and are far slower to gain jobs as the economy recovers."

Across all groups, "the wealth gap between rich and poor widened. The share of wealth held by the top 10% of U.S. households increased from 49% in 2005 to 56% in 2009."

# Church Meet Backs Strikers, Hits Anti-Muslim Racism, Afghan War

**CHARLOTTE, N.C., June 26** — Among the 4,000 people attending a nationwide Unitarian Universalist convention here, there was sharp debate over issues that directly affect the working class: support for an upcoming supermarket strike, scapegoating of Muslims and withdrawal from Afghanistan.

One resolution called for support for 62,000 Southern California supermarket workers, who will probably go on strike. This would be the biggest labor action in the U.S. since the last Southern California supermarket strike, in 2003 — the biggest fight-back against the notion of "shared sacrifice." A few objections arose: that boycotts might hurt unionized workers not on strike or that not shopping in certain areas would be impossible. These arguments were countered by one speaker, saying that this detracted from viewing the action as class struggle. The vast majority of delegates voted to support the strike in a variety of ways.

One issue that caused debate was whether representative Peter King's hearings attacking the Muslim community were related to pressure for continued war in the Middle East. Most attendees agreed racist, hate-inspired King's assault must be stopped. However, many weren't prepared to support the idea that the "war on terror" is in reality one of control over resources. With that clause removed, the resolution passed. But all delegates present had been exposed to contradictions in Obama's promises for withdrawal. The issue of CHALLENGE with an editorial on the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline as well as an article about demonstrating at King's office was sold to 99 delegates.

The resolution on ending the Afghan war was opposed by those who felt it was not of immediate concern (resolutions are categorized as "Actions of Immediate Witness"). The retort came quickly that getting out NOW gave the motion immediacy! While that resolution didn't receive the 2/3 vote necessary, the specter of this longest war put all else in perspective.

The final plenary voted on an attempt by the trustees to eliminate all Actions of Immediate Witness completely. If it had not been defeated, the most significant debate would have been abolished, along with the chance for delegates to bring issues to the floor. Top-down forces are still at work to divert anti-racist and pro-working-class struggle from even appearing on the agenda.

Historically, there has been movement to organize caucuses into all-black and all-white groups, with emphasis given to "multicultural" ideas. This has been countered by a consciously multi-racial caucus that called lunchtime meetings to strategize our anti-racist presence.

Next year, much business as usual will be set aside when we meet in Phoenix, AZ, with the intent on making the immigration issue primary. While the sentiments of many church-goers are on the side of support to immigrants, what actions are taken on the streets of Phoenix most certainly will be led by rank-and-file members.

This is a vital point. The last act of the last plenary was a neo-fascist move by the moderator to appoint an Accountability Committee to assure that no unapproved actions take place. What makes this committee so dangerous is that two members have been appointed from the Allies for Racial Equity (the all-white group) and the Diverse Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries (the "people of color" group), both led by racist, anti-communist misleaders. These two groups have been instrumental in fighting against multi-racial Unitarian Universalism. We have bad news for them: we will organize forces for street actions of immediate witness right there in Phoenix.✪

# LETTERS

***We encourage all CHALLENGE readers to send in concise letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses around the world.***

## Chilean Bosses Black Out Miners', Student Strikes

Forty thousand miners at the state-owned company Codelco, the world's largest copper producer, went on a one-day strike in the northern Chilean city of Ventanas. This was a first for the miners of the entire company. The strike itself was more of a demonstration than an actual 'strike,' as it was meant as a warning salvo against what may happen should the country's main resource be sold to private interests, foreign or national. In response, the government claimed that the strike was 'illegal' but there has been neither talks of repression nor police intervention.

Miners are a strong force here in Chile, and their demonstrations are considered relevant. However, it's been years since they have moved as they did back in the days of the nitrate mining, as written in exposing *Santa María de Iquique* [Ed.: popular folk composition exposing the massacre of 3,000 miners in 1907] especially since they are the best paid public workers in the country and the only ones who get a proper, first-world wage within the system.

The composition of the workforce is mostly men: there are only a few women who take on tasks such as driving those gigantic trucks or pushing a button here and there. Although the business pages of newspapers took notice of the strike, there's a huge factor going on that prevents the news from reflecting its real relevance: Copa América. The whole country is focused on the struggles and victories of the national fútbol [Ed.: soccer] team in Argentina right now, so everything else gets sidetracked.

The only enduring social movement is the high-school and college strikes for a better public education, but that's an entirely different subject. It doesn't help that in Chile most media is right-wing-owned and focus on showing no-news and gossip stuff rather than relevant issues. They don't even bother showing relevant issues with a fascist bias; they just don't show them.

*A Friend in Chile*

*CHALLENGE COMMENT: Thank you for the letter. Your comments about the capitalist news media are right on. Please keep writing and hopefully distributing CHALLENGE to your friends and coworkers!*

*We'd like to add that the Codelco union leadership struck on the 40th anniversary of the copper nationalization by Salvador Allende, but the irony here is that the last copper miners' strikes, in August of 1971, were against Allende, one month after nationalization! Allende today is remembered positively by many workers and students worldwide, but in reality his three-year rule was rocked by continuous strikes and land seizures by super-oppressed Mapuche Indians and disillusioned workers and students.*

*Many workers and students still carry uncritical nostalgia for Allende, a self-proclaimed "Marxist," who was elected President of Chile in 1970 with the support of the so-called "Communist" Party. The Chilean CP uncritically supported Allende and left Chilean workers with no real communist leadership to lead the struggle to arm the working class to seize power and smash capitalism.*

*When the bosses in Chile and the U.S. decided in 1973 that workers were getting out of Allende's control, the Hitlerite Pinochet regime, with CIA support, was able to massacre thousands of Chilean working-class families who were both unarmed and ideologically unprepared to resist the fascist outrages.*

*Following the same losing strategy, the pacifist "Communist" Party in 1970 Indonesia disarmed workers there by relying on an alliance with the nationalist capitalist Sukarno and led 500,000 workers to a slaughter so genocidal that the bosses who ordered it complained that the rivers were too clogged with corpses.*

*The Progressive Labor Party aims to smash racist, sexist, imperialist capitalism with a communist revolution led by a mass communist party that makes no compromises with nationalist or capitalist forces. The Codelco miners, and all workers and students in Chile, are on a dead-end course with their union misleaders who offer symbolic strikes that push the illusion that relying on "government" bosses will serve the workers' needs.*

*To change that, PLP must grow there. We need more letters and articles like this, and for our friends in these areas to share CHALLENGE with their friends, and amongst workers. A mass CHALLENGE readership in Latin America's Southern Cone region can lead to mass, fighting PLP collectives that will smash Pinochet's successors.*

## 'Afterlife' Is Here on Earth; Everything You Do Counts

About 35 years ago, I was asked to take over the leadership of a Party committee Comrade Milt Rosen, PLP Chairperson, had been leading. There was a major personal setback in my life. I told Milt I was depressed, did not want to screw up this new assignment, and that maybe we should find someone else. I will never forget Milt's reply: "It's good you brought it up," he said, "but have you ever heard of burying yourself in your work?"

I guess I had expected something more sympathetic and supportive. I lifted my chin up and said, "Oh, uh, okay, I'll give it a try." And in fact, it was exactly the "therapy" I needed.

A few years later, when I could reflect on this experience, it dawned on me that Milt handled similar situations with other comrades differently, with lots of listening, encouragement, and support.

I put together what Milt had spoken and written about: to build a base for communism, to give leadership, you have to know people well enough so that you don't see them or treat them as all the same. Milt understood me well enough to know that what I needed was a good jolt out of feeling sorry for myself.

In the years since, I've tried to put this approach into practice, along with the myriad of other things I learned from Milt about how to live as a communist.

Sometimes people ask me if I believe in an afterlife. I say yes. It's right here on earth. Because of those you influence, what you do and say — positive and negative — lives on through other people, and, through them, more people. Therefore, everything you do counts.

*A Comrade*

## Multi-racial Fight Hits Back At Pa. KKK

When a black family moved from Philadelphia to Pennsylvania, they expected to find some peace of mind in a smaller community. They bought a house in Westmont, a predominately white neighborhood. They settled in, enrolled their children in the local school system and attempted to become part of the community. Then some person or persons spray-painted the front of their home with the words: "Go back to Philly or else. KKK."

The Klan has been active in the Johnstown area for many years. At one point there were six active Klaverns (KKK chapters) in the area. In the 1980s, a young inter-racial couple was gunned down as they crossed a bridge in Johnstown. The racist killer had shot from the side of the mountain. The case was never solved, though some claimed the killer may have been Joseph Paul Franklin, a neo-Nazi traveling the country targeting inter-racial couples. He was found guilty and is still in prison. If Franklin had done the shooting, it's highly likely he had help from local racists.

However, there has always been resistance to these racists. In the 1990s, a multi-racial group of townspeople drove the Klan from town during a Klan rally in Central Park.

In the recent incident, neighbors of the targeted black family rallied at their home, helped remove the spray-painted garbage and formed a human chain around the house to demonstrate their refusal to bow down to the racist terrorists. Most of those forming the chain were white.

The mother has been invited to the local CHALLENGE discussion group and plans on attending the next meeting. Certainly it is positive that people are attempting to stand up against this racism, and really need the communist ideas of the PLP.

*Red Coal*

## Rally, March, CHALLENGE Kick Capitalist Ass

On a hot Saturday morning, the smell of struggle was in the air. I marched proudly alongside our comrades at a rally in Brooklyn to fight against unemployment and the racist bankers.

Armed with CHALLENGEs, leaflets, and the angry voices of our comrades, we marched down the streets of Bushwick. We asked this working-class neighborhood, made up of mostly Latinos and blacks, to fight back against the capitalist pigs that exploit and destroy the lives of workers each and every day. We connected the fascist immigration policies, unemployment, and budget cuts to the bosses' imperialist wars for oil and profit.

As we chanted "Los obreros unidos jamás serán vencidos" ("Workers, united, will never be defeated"), the community responded strongly by grabbing CHALLENGEs and leaflets. Three hundred newspapers were distributed! It was amazing to see workers join our chants and raise their fists in support. The rally encouraged the workers to fight back against this racist capitalist system. One of our comrades gave a powerful speech that I hope resonated throughout the community and lit a fire that has long been put out by the darkness that the capitalists produced.

I thought this rally was an amazing boost to start a day with a daily dose of kicking capitalist ass.

*Red Student*

## Militant Senegal Youth Storm Government, Cops

Comrades, since you left, there has been a wave of struggle by the youth of Senegal against the plan to change the election system. President Wade introduced a plan to establish a vice-president, who would be his son! The youth have turned out en masse in the streets of Dakar, marching to the door of the National Assembly where a huge demonstration lasted almost 10 hours, and forced Wade to pull back his plan.

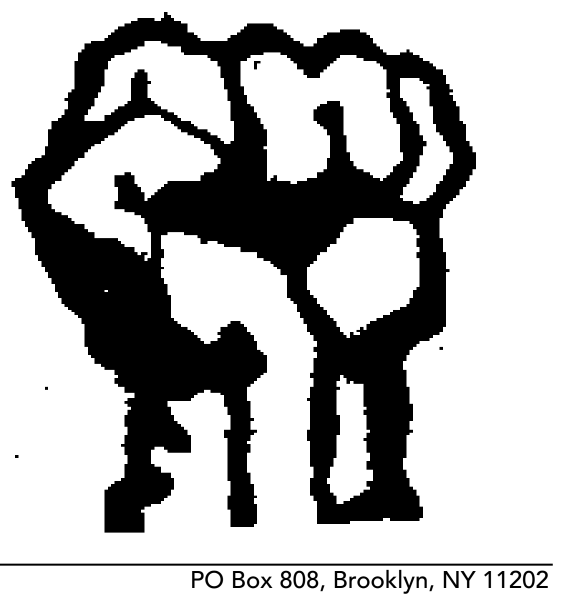
Actually, things had already kicked off the night before at the National Assembly with the formation of a big coalition bringing together parties of the opposition along with other mass organizations of the people. This movement has become the June 23 Movement and is the largest opposition coalition to Wade.

Some of the leaders of the youth movement were arrested at the demonstration, but the youth regrouped at the police station and after several skirmishes with the cops, the youth "hostages" were freed. Three days after the June 23 demonstration, there were more demonstrations, this time against electric power failures.

Here again, the youth took over the streets, pillaging at times the SENELEC (National Electricity Company) headquarters, and targeting the homes of Wade regime supporters. This was all mobilized after June 23. The forces of the left had not been prepared for this sudden rebellion in our country, but now we're working to build on it!

All of our thoughts are with our comrades in the PLP. See you soon!

*Friend in Senegal*



# Workers, Students Unite vs. U. Maryland's Racist, Sexist Abuse

**COLLEGE PARK, MD July 15 —** University of Maryland College Park (UMCP) workers and students are fighting serious abuses against campus workers in facilities, grounds and housekeeping services. Workers describe working there as being on a plantation.

Managers harass and demean workers, using racist and ethnic slurs against black, white and Latino workers. They sexually harass and assault many of the Latina housekeepers. The managers treat workers unequally, increase their workloads, pass them over for promotions, deny them professional development opportunities and write them up when they are sick. When workers file complaints, they get extra work or are moved to a different zone.

The Black Faculty and Student Association (BFSA) along with AFSCME (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees) 1072 compiled workers' experiences into a 56-page report and met with the university president in May. More than that, BFSA organized workers, students, alumni and community residents to rally. After two months, the president's office only responded: "Thank you for your concern. We are looking into it." But the workers refused to give up.

On July 15th workers, students, and community residents attended the 4th forum to testify, offer support and organize. The power and energy were clear. Latino, black and white workers all spoke in solidarity with one another:

"You — my black, white and Latino brothers and sisters — are my family. The administration makes you invisible, but you keep this place running.

"We look out for one another. Don't go to management."

A PL'er emphasized that "fighting racism is the most important thing you can do to stay strong," and reminded everyone that in the '60s, students and workers were able to shut down that very campus.

The evening's translator made sure everything was clear in both English and Spanish. Male workers and students again and again expressed their outrage about the sexual abuse of their female co-workers. Three workers from American University also attended, saying that they also are experiencing much of the same on their campus.

Several speakers talked about this struggle in the context of broader anti-racist and anti-sexist fights, and some people attacked capitalism as the root cause. Everyone understood that the university is a business, driven by profits. It wants to make as much money as possible off its facilities workers who keep the buildings running, its students who have to pay rising tuition and its faculty and graduate students who bring the research grants and do the classroom labor.

***...speakers talked about this struggle in the context of broader anti-racist and anti-sexist fights, and...attacked capitalism as the root cause.***

Those known to have spoken out have experienced retaliation: receiving more work, being moved and having co-workers told not to speak to them. But they are not backing down, and they have strong support from a coalition of other campus employees, students and the community. The students are very serious and engaged. A student leader of a women's organization spoke about actions they have already taken, including leafleting in one administrator's neighborhood and letting people know their neighbor is covering up for racist and sexist managers.

### Future Plans

Campus workers continue to speak out and organize in spite of retaliation. Following their leadership, students and alumni are organizing further actions, including leafleting at Obama's Town Hall meeting on campus, information pickets outside the University and a rally at the first football home game of the year. In a show of solidarity, students will walk the halls at 5 am when housekeepers are most vulnerable, to show support and to observe any abuses.

The unity among campus workers and the strong support from students is vital in this struggle. Regardless of the University's response, it will not eliminate the power of the University managers, President Loh, and the Board to exploit and control workers. We must unite, neither on the basis of race nor sex, but under one working class, one party.For that, Progressive Labor Party invites readers to engage in discussions about the need for communism to build a society free of racism and the oppression of women workers.✪

Contact desafio.challenge@gmail.com if you'd like to discuss these ideas and get involved.

Read and see more about this struggle at http://UMDCampusJustice.wordpress.com



## RED EYE ON THE NEWS

***Below are excerpts from mainstream newspapers that may be of use for our readers. Abbreviations: NYT=New York Times, GW=Guardian Weekly, LAT=Los Angeles Times***

### Doing tough work, and keeping too quiet

**NYT, 7/16 —** ….I spent a few days...talking to everyday people, blue collar workers, trying to... survive the present.

They do hard jobs and odd jobs- any work they can find to keep the lights on and their children fed. No one mentioned the asinine argument the debt ceiling. No one. Life is pressing down on them so hard that they can barely breathe.

They are honest hard working people who do honest work- crack-the-bones work; lift-it, chop-it, empty-it, glide-it-in-smooth work; feel-the-flames-up-close work; crawl-down-in-there work- things that no one wants to do but that someone must.

They are women whose skins glisten from steam and sweat, whose hands stay damp from being dipped in buckets and dried on aprons. They are men who work in boots with steel toes....

They are people whose bodies stiffen by sunrise, so much so that it takes pills for them to get out of bed without pain....

The people who work these jobs are the backbone of this country, and will continue to be.

### Months out of work? Goodbye...

**NYT, 7/26 —** ….Making it more difficult for 14 million jobless Americans to get back to work, job vacancy postings on popular sites...revealed hundreds that said employers would consider (or at least "strongly prefer") only people currently employed or just recently laid off.

Unemployed workers have long suspected that...holes on their resumes left them less attractive to employers....

"I feel like I'm being shunned by our entire society." A recruiter had told her that despite her skill set she would be a "hard sell" because she had been out of work for more than six months.




### Law keeps immigrant workers poor

**NYT, 7/18 —** To the editor: "Better Lives for Mexicans Cut Allure of Going North" (front page, July 16), about diminished Mexican emigration, suggests that changes in the H-2A visa have made it easier for farmers and immigrant workers to find one another. But while it works O.K for farmers, it does little to protect immigrant workers.

Guest workers' restricted status deprives them of bargaining power, which encourages employers to prefer guest workers over United States citizens and keep their wages low...

The majority of our nation's 2.5 million farmworkers are undocumented.

### Economies prosper, but not people

**NYT, 7/24 —** …. South American countries — including Chile and Brazil, two of the region's healthiest economies — are going through growing pains as the use of credit grows. The credit-fueled spending has driven extensive economic growth. But it has also opened the door to abuses, as credit issuers have used predatory techniques to lure customers particularly the young and less affluent.

"We have turned ourselves into modern slaves," said Osvaldo Oyarce, a filmmaker who is trying to make a movie about Chilean consumerism. National economic success, he said has come at a cost: "A population that is highly indebted, with high levels of depression and frustration."

### It's extremely expensive to be poor

**NYT, 7/1 —** "Anyone who has ever struggled with poverty knows how extremely expensive it is to be poor."

James Baldwin penned that line more than 50 years ago....

Baldwin was referring to the poor being consistently overcharged for inferior goods. But I've always considered that sentence in the context of the extreme psychological toll of poverty, for it is in that way that I, too, know well how expensive it is to be poor.

I know the feel of thick calluses on the bottom of shoeless feet. I know the bite of the cold breeze that slithers through a drafty house. I know the weight of constant worry over not having enough to fill a belly or fight an illness.

It is in that context that I am forced to assume if Washington politicians ever knew the sting of poverty then they have long since vanquished the memory.... Nearly half of all members of Congress are millionaires.

**MORE ITEMS AVAILABLE AT WWW.PLP.ORG**

# 'Don't Buy Scab Food!'
# California PL Mobilizes to Back Store Workers

**LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, July 27 —** In preparation for a probable strike of the 62,000 Southern California grocery workers, approximately 300 mostly black, Latino and women grocery workers and supporters, rallied and marched this week. The two paths open to workers were on display: On the one hand, the NAACP and the workers' union, the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) push strategies of compromise and concession, proven to lead to wage-cuts and attacks on pensions. PLP, on the other hand, was there with the message that this and other strikes are training grounds, where workers learn that united, we can smash capitalism and its racist exploitation.

Due to capitalist competition, Ralph's, Albertson's, Von's and other chains must continually strive to maximize their profits. The result is a race to the bottom for workers as their wages and benefits are attacked. Now, after suffering through UCFW-approved wage and pension give-backs, the workers are being asked to pick up an additional $7,000 a year in health care costs! For many of these workers this cut would be a third of their annual income. Meanwhile these three stores raked in $5 billion in profits last year!

In this period of economic crisis, expanding imperialist wars and racist unemployment a potential strike of over 60,000 workers is an opportunity for our Party to join the class-struggle, mobilize our friends on the job, campus and in our mass organizations to expose the inherent exploitation of capitalism and the bankrupt tactics of the sell-out unions and build the revolutionary communist PLP.

***...the workers are being asked to pick up an additional $7,000 a year in health care costs! For many of these workers this cut would be a third of their annual income. Meanwhile these three stores raked in $5 billion in profits last year!***

Leading up to the march, about 30 members of a local church gathered at a nearby store where they demonstrated and then marched inside, handing out letters of support to the workers. This was after Party members pushed for a resolution at a national convention of the Universalist Church (*see page 5*) to support the strike nationally, pledging to hold demonstrations and walk the picket lines. A contingent of PLP members and friends from the church joined the rally and march wearing stickers "Don't Buy Scab Food," which was a hit for many workers.

Several angry workers gave speeches at the rally, including one young black woman worker who boldly condemned the bosses' attacks and called on the unity of ALL workers. However, under union "leadership" these workers can't win. These hacks even have the gall to put on their website that they have selected grocery stores where they have weekly pickets and informational leafleting with the aim to apparently win over community support. However, on three separate occasions members and friends have gone to these locations to find no picket lines or anyone handing out information.

On the one hand, it shows the lack of seriousness by the union but on the other hand it gives us the opportunity to expose the essence of union leadership as the bosses' lackeys. With the union missing, we can pass out our literature, mobilize our base and mass organizations and take on more leadership. We have made modest efforts thus far but can do much better. We must improve our distribution of CHALLENGE and connect the struggles from workers fighting back here to workers fighting back all over the world. This will contribute to the growth of the PLP and the eventual victory of the working class.✪

# NYS Unions Suck Up to Governor; Workers' Power Can Sweep Them Out

**NEW YORK —** The lesson of Wisconsin state workers was that instead of accepting whatever the state government gives us, we should organize mass struggle. For that, they received overwhelming workers' support. Here, it's a different story.

The CSEA (Civil Service Employees Association) union sold out NY government workers in a projected agreement with the state that attacks the living standards of 66,000 workers in the operational services unit. The Governor of NY, Andrew Cuomo, congratulated the union leadership, in a communication sent in June that reads: "The union has worked very hard to get an agreement that benefits its membership in these difficult times."

"This is sheer hypocrisy," was the comment from one NYS worker, who asked, "how does this benefit the workers if we are not getting a raise for two years? How is this beneficial when we'd only get a 2% raise in 2015 and 2016? They don't see the impact of the high cost of living, the increases in rents, transportation, and gas? To make matters worse they are taking more out of our pay for health insurance — giving our money to the "poor" corporations that are already sucking our blood; how is that?"

### Who Benefits From Workers' Sacrifice?

During the third week of June several state workers were fired. One of them had a salary of $32,000 a year, but in a few days another person making twice as much, $65,000 a year, replaced him, to do exactly the same job. That's only one example of the way state bureaucracy works.

The majority of the jobs lost, though, were in the lower-wage levels, and have not been replaced, making twice as much work for those still holding a job. The job and wage cuts are both racist and sexist, as the workers affected are black, Latino and women.

Meanwhile, at the higher levels, bureaucracy is growing, as is the case in SUNY Downstate, where a new position as president assistant (with a bloated salary) appeared overnight. There is no talk of sacrifice at that level.

The sacrifice that Obama, Cuomo and friends are talking about is the sacrifice of workers. We're told that the crisis is everyone's problem. But when things get better and the bosses are making money, we don't get pay raises or better services; there is no talk of sharing the wealth.

### Make the Bosses Pay For Their Crisis

The state makes billions collecting our taxes, the big shots get the most money and those of us who do all the work get paid a small portion of any company's budget. Meanwhile, the war eats up billions of dollars. It is a lie that there is no money; the crisis is the product of the war and the bosses' own greed for profits. Let the bosses bear the brunt of their crisis; we shouldn't have to pay for it.

### Union Leadership Always Helps the Bosses

The union didn't talk to us first, because the union didn't want to fight. Reading the small print of the proposed contract, it is clearly stated that: "The reduction of the labor force or the closing of departments will be done by the heads of departments." The union leadership, meanwhile, pushes the lie that there won't be any layoffs, and that's the reason why they were forced to sign an agreement that doesn't include a pay raise.

There was not even a small attempt to fight back. The union leadership was in a hurry to sign an agreement, and made a call to the workers to help "solve" the crisis. They only want us to rubber-stamp what they've already agreed to with the bosses. The union leadership treats us like recyclable trash to be used to keep their plush salaries rolling in. The union is just there to defend the bosses' interests — giving in and surrendering everything that we workers fought for and achieved through years of struggles and many sacrifices.

### The Reality of the Working Class

We grow poorer by the day; we are carrying the burden of a capitalist system in crisis, and we're at the end of our rope. We're barely surviving. We work just to pay rent, eat and support the capitalist parasites that squeeze us as hard as they can with their taxes. We are now living in a historical period dominated by inter-imperialist rivalry. U.S. bosses have needed to spend billions of dollars in their wars to profit from and control the flow of oil that their capitalist rivals in Europe, China and throughout Asia need to keep their economies going.

The U.S. capitalists' fight to maintain their top-dog position in gathering international profits leads to the worsening of the economic and political situation worldwide: the unemployment of millions of workers who end up in the streets, and medical services not only getting worse but becoming nonexistent for millions of workers.

As workers we have the power to sweep this mafia off the face of the earth and to build our own system, A COMMUNIST SYSTEM, as the only solution. In this new system, we won't need money because we'd work only for the things that we need, such as housing, health care, education, food and recreation. In the past, workers in the Soviet Union and China demonstrated that this can be achieved with workers' power even though their gains have been reversed through alliances with capitalists. PLP will not repeat that mistake and will build real communism without bosses and their profits.

Health workers, teachers, students, parents, organized in Progressive Labor Party can be an incredible force. We can understand that the conditions of workers everywhere in the world are our own conditions. The growth of our working-class consciousness will enable our forces worldwide to defeat, once and for all, the abusive, blood-sucking capitalist system.✪